

REMARKS

I. Status of the Application

Claims 1-14 are pending in this application. In the November 3, 2006 office action, the examiner objected to the specification and the drawings for certain informalities. In addition, the examiner rejected claims 1 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,275,168 to Slater (hereinafter "Slater"). The examiner also rejected claims 2-8 and 10-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Slater in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,734,663 to Fye et al. (hereinafter, "Fye").

In this response, applicants have amended the specification and the drawings. Applicants have also added new claims 15-19. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of pending claims 1-14, as well as new claims 15-19, in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

II. The Examiner's Objection to the Specification

In the November 15, 2006 office action, the examiner objected to the specification for various informalities. In this response, the applicant has amended the specification to resolve the informalities noted by the examiner as well as other informalities.

Applicant notes that on page 2 of the November 15, 2006 office action, the examiner states that items 144a and 144b do not appear in Fig. 4; however, these items 144a and 144b do appear in FIG. 5.

In view of the foregoing amendments to the specification, it is respectfully submitted that the examiner's objection to the specification should be withdrawn.

III. The Examiner's Objection to the Drawings Should be Withdrawn

In the November 15, 2006 office action, the examiner objected to the drawings because item 150a was not shown. Applicant has corrected this informality by including item 150a in Fig. 3. In particular, one of the former reference numerals 150c has been amended to reference numeral 150a.

Applicant has made other amendments to the drawings. In particular, in FIG. 3, one of the former reference numerals 150b has been amended to reference numeral 152b. Also in FIG. 3, reference numeral 130 has been added. In FIG. 4, reference numeral 100 has been added. In this response, applicant has amended the specification to resolve the informalities noted by the examiner as well as other informalities.

In view of the foregoing amendments to the drawings, it is respectfully submitted that the examiner's objection to the drawings should be withdrawn.

IV. Claims 1 and 9

In the November 15, 2006 office action, the examiner rejected claims 1 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Slater. As provided in MPEP § 2131, "A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). "The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ... claim." *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ 2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989). In addition, the elements must be arranged as required by the claim. *In re Bond*, 910 F.2d 831, 15 USPQ2d 1566 (Fed. Cir. 1990).

The Slater reference does not disclose all the limitations of claims 1 and 9. For example, with respect to claim 1 the Slater reference does not disclose a buss element comprising “a conductive piece of metal formed into a series of contact connectors and a network of elongate conductors extending between and among the series of contact connectors.” An exemplary embodiment of this limitation is disclosed in Figs. 3 and 5 of the present application, including the conductive piece of metal disclosed as reference numeral 136, including contact connectors 140 and elongate conductors 142.

In the November 15, 2006 office action the examiner referenced Fig. 1 and col. 8, lines 48-55 of Slater as disclosing this limitation of “a piece of metal formed into ... a network of elongate conductors extending between and among [a] series of contact connectors.” Col. 8 lines 48-55 of Slater read as follows:

As discussed above the top plate 28 also includes a plurality of openings, illustrated in FIG. 3 by the exemplary opening 52d. The opening 52d corresponds to the socket 30d, and similar openings exist that correspond to each of the other sockets 30a, 30b, 30c, 30e, 30f and 30g. (See FIG. 1) The opening 52d is preferably slightly conical to allow for alignment adjustment of the plug 40d during assembly of the measurement module 14 onto the sensor module 12.

Applicant fails to see where a buss element comprising “a piece of metal formed into ... a network of elongate conductors extending between and among [a] series of contact connectors” is disclosed anywhere in the foregoing passage or in Fig. 1 of Slater. Furthermore, this limitation does not appear to be found in any other location in Slater. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Slater does not disclose all the limitations of claim 1, and the examiner’s rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn. Should the examiner maintain the rejection of claim 1, the examiner should clearly show where the limitation may be found in Slater.

Another example of a limitation of claim 1 not found in Slater is that of “the select one of the plurality of connectivity configurations defined by a predetermined set of discontinuities introduced in the network of elongate conductors.” An exemplary embodiment of this limitation is disclosed on page 15, line 20 to page 17, line 11 of the present application.

In the November 15, 2006 office action the examiner referenced col. 4, lines 28-29 of Slater as disclosing this limitation of “discontinuities introduced in the network of elongate conductors.” Col. 4 lines 28-29 of Slater read as follows:

... is not limited to applications involving 12S meter forms, but may readily be incorporated into 2S, 3S, 4S, 8S/9S and other will known meter forms by those of ordinary skill in the art.

Applicant fails to see where “... discontinuities introduced in the network of elongate conductors” is disclosed anywhere in the foregoing passage of Slater. Furthermore, this limitation does not appear to be found in any other location in Slater. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Slater does not disclose all the limitations of claim 1, and the examiner’s rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn. Should the examiner maintain the rejection of claim 1, the examiner should clearly show where the limitation may be found in Slater.

In addition to the above limitations of claim 1, distinct but similar limitations are included in claim 9 and the examiner references the same passages of Slater as disclosing the references. Accordingly, as set forth above, Slater does not disclose all the limitations of claim 9, and the examiner’s rejection of claim 9 should also be withdrawn.

For at least the reasons discussed above, Slater does not disclose all limitations of claims 1 and 9 of the present application. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that

claims 1 and 9 are allowable and the examiner's rejection of claims 1 and 9 as anticipated by Slater under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) should be withdrawn.

V. Dependent Claims 2-8 and 10-14

Dependent claims 2-8 and 10-14 depend from and incorporate all the limitations of one of allowable independent claims 1 or 9. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that dependent claims 2-8 and 10-14 are also allowable for at least the same reasons the independent claims 1 and 9 are allowable.

VI. Conclusion

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted the applicant has made a patentable contribution to the art. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application, including new claims 15-19, is therefore respectfully requested.

In the event applicant has inadvertently overlooked the need for an extension of time or payment of an additional fee, the applicant conditionally petitions therefore, and authorizes any fee deficiency to be charged to deposit account 13-0014.

Respectfully submitted,



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